



UDAF AND USDA/NRCS JOIN FORCES TO PROTECT CACHE VALLEY DAIRY

The Utah Department of Agriculture and Food (UDAF) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA/NRCS) announce the conclusion of a joint project that will protect some of Cache County's most valuable farmland. The UDAF and NRCS recently finalized the purchase of a conservation easement on 13.1 acres of land owned by Evan and Ines Olsen in Young Ward, Utah. The farmland is presently used to grow alfalfa to feed the Olsen's dairy cows.

The Olsen Family Dairy, has been in existence since the late 1930's, and is one of several highly productive dairies in the county that sends raw milk to a local cheese processing company.

"I am happy to announce that this is our second joint project with the Natural Resources Conservation Service in the Cache Valley," said UDAF Commissioner, Cary G. Peterson. "The Olsens are one of many land owners who recognize the importance of protecting their land for future generations," Commissioner Peterson added.

This project joins a similar conservation easement purchase concluded last year with dairy farmers Jon and Ralph Meikle of Smithfield.

(more)

The Olsen property is located in the farming community of Young Ward, Utah in Cache County.

The sale of the easement enabled the Olsens to purchase 19 acres of land nearby, that otherwise could be used for residential development. The project helps the dairy protect a source of feed for its animals, and establishes an agriculture buffer zone between it and new homes.

“I have been watching with some concern the accelerating development of residential homes in my area,” said Evan Olsen. “This easement helped me generate enough funds to purchase other property that I can use to feed my herd and protect my operation,” Olsen added.

The conservation easement was purchased through the UDAF’s Critical Agricultural Land Conservation Fund and the USDA’s Farm and Ranchland Protection Program. The two agencies combined funds to purchase the easement from the Olsens. The UDAF contributed \$27,000, the Olsen’s contributed \$13,500 and the NRCS matched those funds with \$40,500. The total easement purchase price equaled roughly 66 percent of the market value of the land.



This is the UDAF’s fifth easement purchase concluded in the past three years. The department has participated in the protection of a total of 226 acres of Utah farmland since 1999.

Conservation easements are a popular tool across the United States to protect dwindling farm and ranchland. They often prohibit any non-agricultural use of the land such as residential development or other uses that are inconsistent with established farming practices in the area. This project is helping the UDAF and Governor Leavitt meet their 1000-day plans to protect 10,000 acres of land each year.

The USDA makes millions of dollars available each year to help communities in various states protect farm and ranch land. In 1998 the State of Utah established the UDAF’s Critical Agricultural Land Conservation Fund, and the LeRay McAllister Critical Land Conservation Fund. Both funds help

Agriculture: Of The Land, Air and Water

communities plan for growth while helping to protect valuable farming and open land.

For more information about saving farmland and conservation easements, visit: www.ag.utah.gov.

##

Agriculture Industry Profile
For
Cache County
(1999 American Farmland Trust Data)

Agriculture Sector Generates Greatest Share Of Output In Cache County

Employment Multiplier: One Job In The Agriculture Sector Generates Two Additional County Jobs

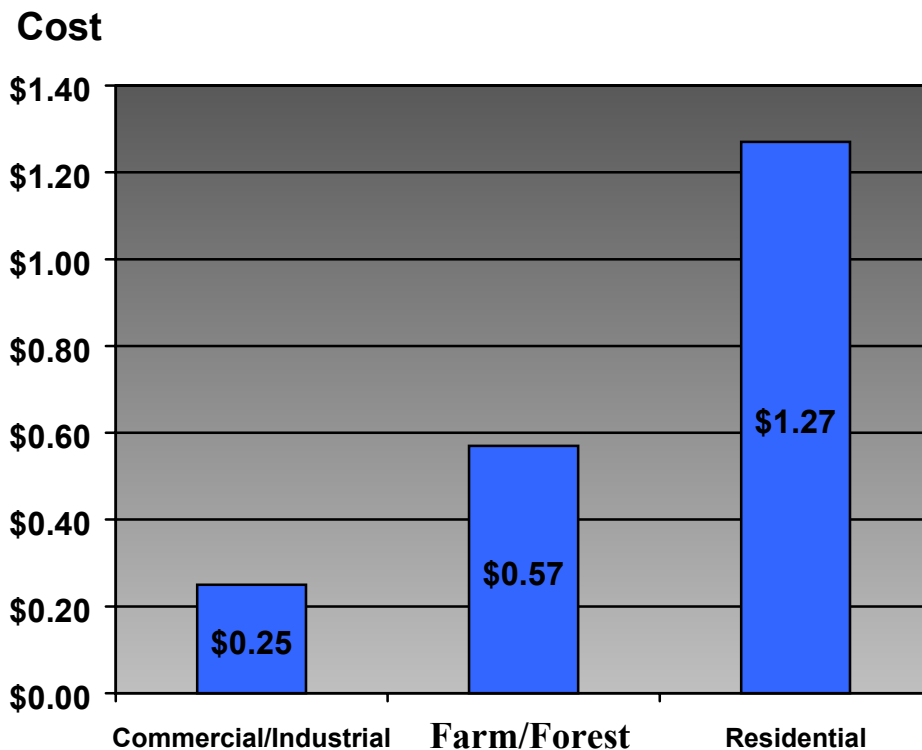
Every Dollar Earned In Food Processing Generates An Additional Dollar Of Income In Cache County

In 1999, Agriculture Produced 26% Of All County Output (at \$1.2 billion)

In 1999, Agriculture Provided 9% Of The County's Employment

County's Population Grew 62% From 1980 To 2001, Projected Annual Growth Is 2%

Cost of Community Services Cache County, 1994 (Snyder and Ferguson 1994)



Agriculture: Of The Land, Air and Water